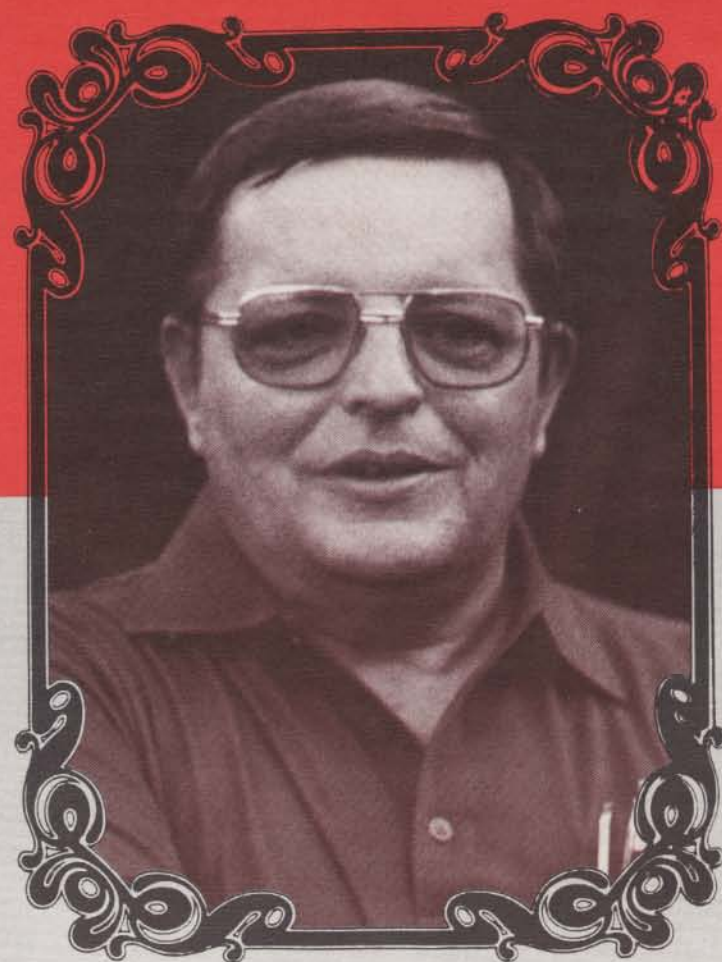


Been Riding With Old Mosby

*Sung by
Frank Bode with Tommy Jarrell and Paul Brown*



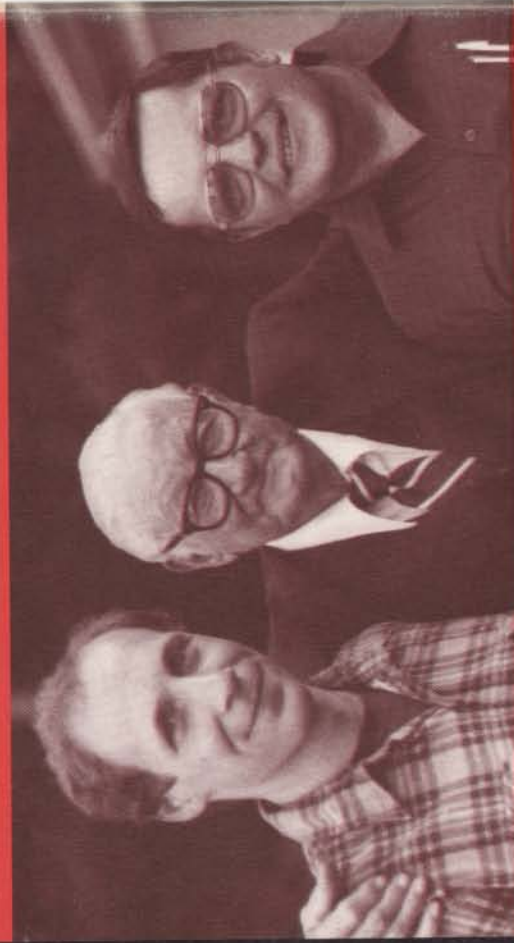
Been Riding With Old Mosby
Sung by Frank Bode
with Tommy Jarrell and Paul Brown

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- Band 2 Rank Stranger
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- Band 7 Tempy



Recorded in Toast, N.C. in Sept., 1984 by
Eric Davidson and Ellen Victoria
Annotated by Ellen Victoria

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Sung by Frank Bode
with Tommy Jarrell and Paul Brown

COVER DESIGN BY RICHARD CLINE

DESCRIPTIVE NOTES ARE INSIDE POCKET

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FOLKWAYS RECORDS FTS 31109

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Sung by

Frank Bode with Tommy Jarrell and Paul Brown

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Annotated by Ellen Victoria with Eric Davidson.



Equipment: A Nagra 4 was used for these recordings with conventional and pressure zone microphones.

FRANK BODE

Frank Bode is a North Carolina native, now living in Toast, just outside of Mount Airy. He was born 47 years ago in Greensboro. His father had come to North Carolina from New York City, while his mother was from the farming country of Dobson, N. C. At age nine, when his father died, he moved to Dobson to live with his grandparents. He grew up in Dobson and started to play traditional music there. When he married, just after finishing school, he joined a family of musicians. His wife is a guitarist, her mother played the banjo, and her father played the mandolin and other instruments. Frank plays guitar and sings in the Smokey Valley Boys, a prize-winning old time string band.

In some of the songs on this record, Frank is joined by Paul Brown and Tommy Jarrell.

Paul Brown, age 34, was born in Mt. Kisco, N. Y., into a family from the area of Lynchburg, Va., that traced its roots there back 300 years. He has been picking the banjo since the age of ten. In the late seventies, he moved to the South, and then began to study the fiddle. He was Tommy Jarrell's musical apprentice until Tommy's death in January 1985. Paul sings and picks the banjo with Frank in the Smokey Valley Boys.

Tommy Jarrell, a famous old-time fiddle player of Mount Airy, N. C., was much recorded and was the subject of a documentary by Les Blank, *Sprout Wings and Fly*. He was about 83 at the time that this music was recorded but tragically passed away four months later.

SIDE A

Band 1. Susanna Gal

Frank learned this song from Tommy Jarrell. The song is also known as "Western Country" and "Fly Around My Pretty Little Miss" (a verse not included in this version). It is ubiquitous in the Grayson-Carroll Counties area of Virginia and in the adjoining Mount Airy region of North Carolina. Its origins are unknown, except that according to local informants, it was known as an "original old tune" to the oldest rural musicians at the turn of the century. This indicates that in this region it was current before the Civil War. Paul Newman and Eric Davidson identified "Western Country" as a typical example of the archaic rural music tradition in southwest Virginia ("Band Music of Grayson and Carroll Counties, Va."; Folkways, FS 3832).

Frank sings and plays the guitar, and Tommy plays the fiddle.

I'm goin' to the western country now
Ole Susanna Gal,
I'm goin' to the western country now
Ole Susanna Gal.

Got sixteen horses in my team
As I go riding by,
If I don't get ole Susanna
I'll know the reason why.

I'll hitch old Logan in the lead
Old Morgan in behind,
I'm goin' down that rocky road
Gonna see that gal of mine.

How do you make your living now?
Ole Susanna Gal,
Drinking whiskey and playing cards
Ole Susanna Gal.

Can't stay here if you don't shuck corn,
Ole Susanna Gal,
Can't stay here if you don't shuck corn,
Ole Susanna Gal.

Band 2. Rank Stranger

Frank learned this song from recordings by Ralph and Carter Stanley. Tami Lakue is cited as the author of the words and music, but the song is based on a traditional tune that dates back at least to the Stanley Brothers' youth.

On this band and the next, Frank sings and plays the guitar alone.

I wander again to my home in the mountains,
Where in youth's early dawn I was happy and free.
I look for my friends, but I never could find them,
I found they were all rank strangers to me.

Chorus: Everybody I met seemed to be a rank stranger,

No mother or dad or friends did I see.

I knew not their names and I knew not their faces.

I found they were all rank strangers to me.

They have all moved away, said the voice of a stranger
To a beautiful home by the bright crystal sea.
Some beautiful day I'll meet them in heaven
Where no one will be a stranger to me.

Chorus

Band 3. Roving Gambler

This is an old song, collected by Laws (H4), that probably originated in Ireland. In other versions the main figure is a rambler, a journeyman, a gambling man, and even a navigator, and he can be named Dennis O'Reilly or William Riley. Carl Sandburg, in An American Song Bag, reports a version in which the hero meets the girl in London. Comparison with Irish versions indicates that the deck of cards slipped into the story on this side of the Atlantic. A comparable recording by a Virginia string band can be found on "Songs and Ballads of the Blue Ridge Mountains" (Folkways, AH 3831).

I am a roving gambler, I've gambled all around.
Whenever I meet with a deck of cards,
I lay my money down.

I've gambled over in Washington,
I've gambled down in Spain,

I'm going down to Georgia to knock down my last game.

Had not been in Washington not many more days than three
I fell in love with a pretty little girl,
She fell in love with me.

She took me in her parlor, she cooled me with her fan,
She whispered low in her mother's ear,
I love that gambling man.

Daughter O dear daughter, how can you treat me so?
To leave your dear old mother,
And with a gambler go.

Mother O dear mother, you know I love you well,
But the love I have for the gambling man
No human tongue can tell.

Mother O dear mother, you know I love you well,
But if you ever see me coming back,
I'll be with that gambling man.

Band 4. Sugar Hill

The source of this brief and comical version of "Sugar Hill" is Tommy Jarrell, who learned it from his father and his uncle Charlie. The "Toenail Gap" verse is his own. Traditionally, "sugar hill" referred to the wild part of town.

Frank sings and plays the guitar, and Tommy plays the fiddle.

Five cents in my pocket change,
Two dollars in my bill,
If I had ten dollars more
I'd climb old Sugar Hill.

Jaybird and a sparrow hawk,
They had a little fight together,
They fought all around the briar patch,
And never jerked a feather.

If I had no horse to ride,
I'd be found a walking
Up and down old Toenail Gap
To give that gal a talkin'.

Band 5. Little Maggie

This song belongs to a large complex of moonshiner songs, including "Darling Corey", "Poor Rambler", "The Moonshiner's Song", etc. "Little Maggie" does not appear in collections that antedate the 19th Amendment. It was recorded by Grayson and Whitter around 1930 and became widely known afterwards. Frank Bode has heard it all his life.

Vocals and guitar are by Frank, with Tommy on the fiddle and Paul on the banjo.

Well yonder stands Little Maggie,
With a dram glass in her hand.
She's drinking away her troubles
Over courtin' another man.

First time I saw Little Maggie
She was standing on the banks of the sea.
Had a forty-four around her,
And a banjo on her knee.

Pretty flowers were made for blooming,
Bright stars were made to shine.
Pretty women were made for loving,
Little Maggie was made for mine.

O how can I ever stand it
To see those two blue eyes?
Shining like two blue diamonds,
Two diamonds in the sky.

Lay down your old silver dollar,
Lay down your gold watch and chain.
Little Maggie gonna dance for daddy,
Listen to that old banjo ring.

Go away, go away Little Maggie,
And do the best that you can.
I'll get me another woman,
You can get you another man.

Band 6. Who's Gonna Shoe Your Pretty Little Foot?

This short lyric has been distilled from one, or perhaps two, long traditional ballads originally from the British Isles. The first two verses are found in the song "Fair Annie of Lochroyan" ("Fair Isabell of Rochroyall"/"Lord Gregory"/"The Lass of Lochroyan" and many other titles), collected as Child 76. The "turtle dove" stanza comes from Child 85, "Lady Alice". Other common versions of this song are "Ten Thousand Miles" and "Storms on the Ocean". Cecil Sharp collected nine versions under the title "The True Lover's Farewell". The melody for this version comes from the Carter family "Storms on the Ocean", recorded in 1927. The Child ballads given as sources have complicated plots. In Child 76, a young woman takes her baby and sails to the land of the baby's father, Lord Gregory, to have him take them in. She is intercepted at the door by Lord Gregory's mother, who demands tokens of the girl's identity and then nonetheless sends her back out into the night. Lord Gregory is too late to stop her before she sets sail for home, then watches in horror as her boat is smashed on the rocks. Frank sings and plays the guitar, with Paul playing the fiddle.

Who's gonna shoe your pretty little foot
Who's gonna glove your hand
Who's gonna kiss your ruby red cheeks
When I'm in a far away land?

Papa's gonna shoe my pretty little foot,
Mama's gonna glove my hand,
And sister's gonna kiss my red ruby cheeks
Till you return again.

Now don't you see that turtle dove
As he flies from pine to pine?
He's mourning for his own true love,
Just like I mourn for mine.

Band 7. Wild Bill Jones

Wild Bill Jones is an American original, according to D. K. Wilgers. Frank Proffitt, who has recorded a somewhat different version, says that the song was brought back to North Carolina by "fellows who had gone to West Virginia a-minin' and a-cuttin' timber". A very similar version to this one was recorded by Miss Viney Norton in 1916 in Big Laurel, N.C. (C.J. Sharp, English Folk Songs from the Southern Appalachians). Frank learned this version from local sources, including Doc Watson. The song is very common in the Mount Airy region of North Carolina and adjacent places in southwest Virginia.

Guitar and vocals are by Frank, with banjo by Paul.

As I went out for to take a little walk
I came upon that Wild Bill Jones.
Walkin' and a-talkin' by my true lover's side,
I bid for him to leave her alone.

He said, My age it is twenty-one,
Too old for you to control.
I pulled my revolver from my side,
I destroyed that poor boy's soul.

He reeled and he staggered and he felled to the ground,
He gave one dying moan.
I threw my arms around my darling's neck,
Saying, Darling won't you please come home.

They sent me to prison for twenty long years,
The poor boy longs to be free.
But Wild Bill Jones and that long necked bottle
Have made a ruin of me.

So pass around that long necked bottle
And we'll all go on a spree.
Today was the last of that Wild Bill Jones,
Tomorrow will be the last of me.

SIDE B

Band 1. Precious Jewel

Frank Bode learned this song from his grandfather. It was recorded by Roy Acuff (Columbia, CS 1034). While it is not found in older collections of traditional music, its origin is not known -- like many other secular songs of this region in the early twentieth century, it may have been directly or indirectly derived from an older hymn. Frank sings and plays the guitar.

Way back in the hills, when a boy I once wandered,
Way deep in the grave lies the girl that I loved.
She was called from this earth a jewel for heaven,
More precious than diamonds, more precious than gold.

When a girl of sixteen, we courted each other,
She promised someday to become my sweet wife.
I bought her a ring to wear on her finger,
But the angels called her to heaven one night.

Chorus: A jewel on earth and a jewel in heaven,
She'll brighten the kingdom around God's great throne.
May the angels have peace, God bless her in heaven,
She's broken my heart and she's left me to roam.

Mother Earth has her trials, temptations, and trouble,
She has all her treasures of silver and gold,
But there's one precious jewel Mother Earth cannot account for,
She's resting in peace in God's heavenly fold.

Chorus

Band 2. Piney Woods Gal

This instrumental is a Tommy Jarrell favorite. Tommy learned this in the 1920's when he played in a band with Frank Jenkins and Bryce Goodson. The tune may have been old then.

Tommy Jarrell plays the fiddle -- and introduces the song; Frank plays the guitar, and Paul plays the banjo.

Band 3. Brown's Ferry Blues

The "Brown's Ferry Four" were Alton and Rabon Delmore, Merle Travis, and Grandpa Jones, who played together in the late 1930's and '40's. Authorship of this song has been claimed both by the Delmore brothers and by Sam and Kirk McGee, all of whom had earlier played with Fiddlin' Arthur Smith. The Delmore brothers named one of their albums "Brown's Ferry Blues". The version here comes from them, from Doc Watson, and others. Frank sings and plays the guitar alone.

Hard luck Papa pickin his toes,
Smell his feet wherever he goes
Lord, Lord, got the Brown's Ferry Blues.

Hard luck Papa standin in the rain,
If the world was corn he couldn't get a grain
Lord, Lord, got the Brown's Ferry Blues.

Two old maids lying in bed
One turned over to the other and said,
Lord, Lord, got the Brown's Ferry Blues.

Two old maids sittin in the sand,
Each one wishing the other was a man
Lord, Lord, I got the Brown's Ferry Blues.

Band 4. My Home's Across the Blue Ridge Mountains

These words come from several sources: Jimmy Arnold, Vernon Clifton, and the late Esker Hutchins. It is possible that they were passed down from Zack Payne, a Confederate veteran that Tommy Jarrell knew in 1920, who was "the best old time fiddler" that Tommy "ever heard pull a bow". Old Mosby was General John Singleton Mosby, the "Grey Ghost of the Confederacy", a guerilla cavalry leader who harried Union troops in the Shenandoah Valley with his lightning-quick attacks and rapid disappearances. Many other versions of this song have been collected, under the titles "My Home's Across the Smoky Mountains" and "I'm Going Back to North Carolina". However, the direct historical references unique to this version suggest that first-person reminiscences of one of Mosby's riders have been grafted onto the older and more general lament. Vocals and guitar are by Frank.

Chorus: My home's across the Blue Ridge Mountains,
(repeat twice)

I never expect to see you any more.

I been riding with old Mosby.

(repeat twice)

I never expect to see you any more.

Chorus

I'm down in this Yankee prison.
(repeat twice)

I never expect to see you any more.

Chorus

Rock the baby, feed her candy,
(repeat twice)

I never expect to see you any more.

Chorus

Goodbye, my little Nashville darling,
(repeat twice)

I never expect to see you any more.

Chorus

Band 5. Pretty Polly

The original version of "Pretty Polly" was a mid-eighteenth century English broadside called "The Gosport Tragedy" or "The Cruel Ship Carpenter". Cecil Sharp collected 21 versions of this song in North Carolina, Tennessee, and Kentucky between 1910 and 1916. Willy is a ship's carpenter, Polly a mason's daughter, and after his terrible deed Willy is executed or marooned by his suspicious shipmates. The song may have assimilated a more local resonance, however. According to Mr. J. M. Jarrell of Wayne County, West Virginia (cited by J. H. Cox in Traditional Ballads Mainly from West Virginia), a Polly Aldridge of West Virginia was murdered in the early nineteenth century by a William Chapman, and this song was sung around 1850 in reference to her death. She was not buried in a grave, however, but weighted down with stones and thrown in the Sug River. Chapman was convicted and executed in Martin County, Kentucky. Frank Bode likes this version best, which is similar to one sung by Ralph Stanley.

Frank sings and plays the guitar, with banjo played by Paul.

Polly, pretty Polly, would you take me unkind, (twice)
Come and set beside me, let me tell you my mind.

My mind is to marry and never to part. (twice)
The first time I saw you, you wounded my heart.

Polly, pretty Polly, come go along with me, (twice)
Before we get married some pleasure to see.

She got up behind him and away they did go (twice)
Over the mountains and valleys so low.

They went a little bit farther and what did she spy, (twice)
A fresh dug grave and a spade lying by.

Willie, little Willie, I'm afraid of your ways (twice)
The way you've been acting, you'll lead me astray.

Polly, pretty Polly, your guess is about right (twice)
I dug on your grave best part of last night.

He opened her bosom as white as any snow (twice)
He stabbed her to the heart and the blood did overflow.

He went to the jailhouse and what did he say (twice)
I killed Pretty Polly and I'm trying to get away.

Band 6. Sunny Side of the Mountain

Frank Bode learned this song from Jimmy Martin. It was copyrighted by "Big Slim, the Lone Cowboy" (Harry McAuliffe) and Bobby Gregory in 1946. It was recorded by Wilma Lee and Storey Cooper in 1951 and by Glen Neaves in 1962 (issued by Folkways in 1977; FS 3833).
Vocals and guitar are by Frank.

Don't forget me, little darling, when I'm growing old and gray.
Just a little thought before I'm going far away.
I'll be waiting on the hillside where the wild red roses grow,
On the sunny side of the mountain where the rippling waters flow.

Don't forget about the days we courted many years ago,
Don't forget about the promises you gave me and so
I'll be waiting on the hillside for the day when you will call,
On the sunny side of the mountain where the rippling waters fall.

Please tell me darling, in your letters do you ever think of me?
Please answer, little darling, tell me where you can be.
It's been so long dear since I've seen you but your love still
lingers on,

Don't forget me, little darling, though our love affair is gone.

Band 7. Tempy

This version comes from Tommy Jarrell. Many verses, if not the whole song, are purely American. Bascom Lamar Lunsford reportedly learned one version ("Mole in the Ground") in 1901, from Fred Moody of Haywood County, N.C. In other versions (quoted by Alan Lomax), it may be the male narrator who has been "in the pen with those rough and rowdy men", but in this one it is clearly Tempy, a lady who had something to offer and also various material desires. According to Wayne Erbsen (Backpocket Old Time Songbook), the "barn" or "pen" was originally a "bend" in the Pigeon River that was known as a haven for roughnecks and other colorful characters.

Frank sings and plays the guitar, with Tommy on the fiddle and Paul on the banjo.

Tempy roll down your bangs (twice)
Roll down your bangs, see how they hang
Tempy roll down your bangs.

Wish I was a mole in the ground (twice)
A mole in the ground, I'd root this mountain down,
Wished I was a mole in the ground.

Tempy, what's a man going to do? (twice)
My land debt is due, my whiskey bill, too,
Tempy, what am I going to do?

Now Tempy wants a nine dollar shawl (twice)
When I come over that hill with a twenty-dollar bill
Says, Baby where you been so long?

Tempy, where'd you stay last night? (twice)
I stayed down in the barn with some rough and rowdy men
Tempy, where'd you stay last night?

I wished I was a lizard in the spring (twice)
A lizard in the spring, I'd hear my darling sing
I wished I was a lizard in the spring.

Tempy, roll down your bangs (twice)
Roll down your bangs, see how they hang,
Tempy, roll down your bangs.

LITHO IN U.S.A.